



Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, Inc.

The Sage

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“Lava Mae” Offered at St. Margaret’s Center

St. Margaret’s Community Center in Lennox is thrilled to partner with “Lava Mae” and now offers showers to its ever-growing menu of homeless services.



Lava Mae serves people living on the streets.

Founded in 2013, Lava Mae began by converting public transportation buses into showers and toilets on wheels to deliver hygiene and rekindle dignity for their unhoused neighbors in San Francisco. Today, Lava Mae is taking “Radical Hospitality” -their mission - to the streets by bringing humanity, innovation and collaboration to the way services are delivered to people experiencing homelessness.

The mobile Lava Mae shower unit arrives at St. Margaret’s every Friday and has gained great momentum in the short number of weeks since its start. St. Margaret’s Center is a grateful collaborating partner with this innovative organization and so are its clients. Lava Mae believes that “opportunity unfolds when people are treated with dignity, and everyone rises to the level of care they’re provided.” ❖

Former Client Revisits McGill Street House

Maribel was happy and excited to return to the McGill Transitional Housing Program for a get together with current and former residents. “Staying at McGill House was one of the biggest blessings in my life. I prayed to God to give me and my son a place to stay and He gave me so much more. I still remember how comfortable, safe and happy we were in this house,” she shared with the others. “We have been very fortunate.”



Former McGill Street House residents, mothers and sons, who met at the house, remain friends.

McGill Street House is a program for homeless women with minor children who are experiencing multiple life challenges. The 7-bed transitional facility is owned by the Los Angeles Housing Authority (HUD) with the City of Covina. In partnership with HUD and the City, since 2009, the San Gabriel Region of Catholic Charities has provided a wide array of social services to the women and children. Through case management, individualized service plans are developed with the clients to help them save and move into affordable, permanent housing.

Clients are provided with opportunities to enhance parenting skills and develop asset building skills, as well as nutrition and life skills. They are expected to participate in a budgeting class and have a savings plan.

With a special needs child, Maribel had difficulty coping with issues related to domestic violence. She was at an all-time low when she moved into McGill House, where she stayed for one year. During that time, she rebuilt her self-esteem, learned money management skills, found a job, and saved money. More importantly, her son made friends with other boys his age in the shelter who truly accepted him. “They did not make fun of him. He was always smiling and playful,” recalls Maribel.

Today, Maribel’s days of running and being homeless are way behind her and her son. She is employed and still lives in the housing complex she moved into, over five years ago, with the help of Catholic Charities. ❖

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Message from the Executive Director, Rev. Monsignor Gregory A. Cox

The Los Angeles City Hall was built in 1925-1926. This twenty-seven story structure was constructed with sand from every county in California and with water from each of the state's twenty-one Missions. Today, it still remains one of the most recognizable landmarks in Los Angeles.

Faith-based groups have played a significant role in the development and growth of the City of Los Angeles. Religious groups serve Angelenos in education from pre-school to colleges and universities, as well as in healthcare and social services.

Catholic Charities of Los Angeles serves the three counties of Los Angeles, Santa Barbara and Ventura. We have worked closely with civil authorities, since 1919, in serving the poor and the abandoned of our communities. Today, we work with The Economic and Workforce Development Department to provide employment services to youth. We also receive Los Angeles City pass-through funds for our homeless families and Rapid Re-Housing and Crisis Bridge funding for single adults, individuals and veterans.

In 1925, the Los Angeles City Hall building was constructed with the sand from every California county and with the water from each of the state's twenty-one Missions. In 2018, the Los Angeles community is built with the hand of government and the heart of the faith communities. ❖



**GOLF FOR OUR
COMMUNITY CENTERS
AT THE 22ND ANNUAL
CATHOLIC CHARITIES'
GOLF TOURNAMENT**

**MONDAY, JUNE 18, 2018
ANNANDALE GOLF CLUB,
PASADENA, CA**

FOR MORE INFORMATION,
CALL (213) 251-3495
EMAIL SARNOLD@CCHARITIES.ORG
OR VISIT
WWW.CATHOLICCHARITIESLA.ORG

PROCEEDS FROM THIS EVENT
FEED, HOUSE AND ASSIST
OUR CLIENTS WHO ARE
POOR AND HOMELESS.

Gatekeeper Project “Does So Much Good”

After Nadia McCaffey became very ill last year, she could not leave her apartment for three months. Because she had recently moved to Long Beach, she didn't know many people in the area and was pretty much on her own.

When a friend of Nadia's visited from San Francisco, she was concerned to see Nadia looking so poorly. “She started calling around for help and discovered Catholic Charities,” Nadia remembers. The two women went to Catholic Charities' Long Beach Community Services Center and were



Nadia enjoys her Case Managers Jazmin Burgos, left, and Joan Dilig, right.

interviewed by Joan Dilig, Case Manager for San Pedro Region's Gatekeeper Project.

“From that point on, I didn't have to worry about food or human touch. People at Catholic Charities cared. They do so much good,” Nadia explained. “They were there for me and still are. They touch my heart.”

Currently, the Gatekeeper Project provides a friendly visitor program which brings food, utility assistance and taxi vouchers to about 60 frail elderly and also offers case management services for clients with special needs. ❖

Project Achieve Has “Awesome Case Workers”

A former Catholic Charities’ client, Leola Johnson recalls that she was a registered nurse but went from being self-sufficient, having family and friends, to not being able to help herself.

When Leola came to Catholic Charities’ Project Achieve Emergency Shelter in Long Beach, “everything just got better from there.” There was a mandatory meeting every two weeks with a case manager, “but I needed that, a sounding board,” Leola shared. “When I was there, I went to anything that was offered, such as life skills’ classes and the housing program. The hardest was keeping my spirits up, but I had awesome case workers and everything just opened up. I got my housing approved and now I’m in my own apartment. It’s all good,” Leola said with a big smile.

Project Achieve is a 59 bed shelter that provides for a 60 to



Leola is grateful for her Case Manager, Jazmin Burgos.

90 day emergency stay for adult men and women, with three healthy meals per day, as well as case management services, basic skills workshops and job and housing linkages. ❀

Esperanza Project Helps Youth from El Salvador

Since 2008, the Esperanza Immigrant Rights Project of Catholic Charities of Los Angeles has worked to advance the rights of vulnerable immigrants through education, representation and advocacy.

A recent Esperanza client is Jhonatan, who was born in El Salvador. When his parents immigrated to the United States, Jhonatan was placed in removal proceedings. He began to work with Esperanza attorney Evelyn Cedeno-Naik and, together, less than a year later, they won his case. “It was incredible. The feeling was great,” Jhonatan exclaimed.

Since arriving in the U.S., Jhonatan has been attending school and applying to colleges. Columbia and UC Berkeley are his current top choices. “I want to study something that has to do with math and technology. I was looking at computer science, but I want something that is a little more difficult,” Jhonatan explained.

“Esperanza is a good organization. They’ve helped me with everything and, during the entire process, they were good with me and my family,” Jhonatan concluded. ❀



Jhonatan solves Rubik's Cube puzzles in record time.

Volunteer Prepares Lunch Bags for the Homeless

Amy Hilton has volunteered at Catholic Charities’ St. Robert’s Center in Venice four days a week for a decade, starting there with her first Creative Support Systems’ job coach, a dedicated volunteer at Catholic Charities.

Over ten years, Amy has prepared thousands of brown bag lunches for St. Robert’s Center’s Weekend Food Program for the homeless. Lately, she incorporated her passion for paper shredding into her volunteer job. Lorri Perreault, Our Lady of the Angels Regional Director, provided Amy with an office and a



Amy rests with bags of paper shredding she did over a month's time.

shredder and Amy is helping her to clear out old, unneeded files.

Amy, born 38 years ago, attended elementary schools in Westchester, where her family parish, St. Anastasia Catholic Church, is located. She went to high school at University High in West Los Angeles.

In her teens, Amy participated in Special Olympics track and swimming. She has also enjoyed dance classes and Jazzercise

with her Mom and loves country music, knows all the singers, their songs and most of the words to the songs. ❀

Ventura Community Center Hosts Fire Relief Event

Catholic Charities' Ventura Community Service Center served many people in the last weekend of January for their "Fire Sale." Most of the center's volunteers were there both days and many folks from the surrounding neighborhood also came and helped.

While volunteering during the fire relief event, homeowner Kim Latchis had the opportunity to meet THE Ventura City Firefighters who saved her house from certain destruction. It was a very emotional moment for all. Ventura residents Tristano Solari and Kim Latchis were shown pictures of their home by Ventura City Fire Department Captain Chris Plessner while Engineer Brian Kremer described the battle that took place to save Ms. Latchis' house from burning during the Thomas Fire. The fire was in her backyard when the firefighters arrived.

Ventura resident "Laura," who lost her home in the fire, attended the "Fire Sale" and exclaimed "What a blessing to see so many donations there! I was able to pick up a variety of clothes for us."

For information about programs and services in the Santa Barbara Region of Catholic Charities, which includes both Ventura County and Santa Barbara County, please contact Dan Grimm, JD, MA, MFT, Director, at DGrimm@CCharities.org.



Front row: Tristano Solari, Kim Latchis (Homeowner and volunteer for the distribution event). Ventura City Fire Department: Captain Chris Plessner, Firefighter/Paramedic Ryan Howard, and Engineer Brian Kremer participate in Catholic Charities' Fire Sale.



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Address Service Requested



Photo: Don Milla

San Juan Diego Community Services Center in El Monte provides basic needs assistance including food and clothing.



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